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## **VERMONT ANNOUNCES GREEN RIBBON SCHOOL NOMINEES**

### **Three schools will have the chance to be nationally recognized**

**MONTPELIER** – Secretary of Education Rebecca Holcombe announced today that Vermont has nominated three schools to the U.S. Department of Education (US ED) Green Ribbon Schools program. The three nominees are Camels Hump Middle School, Champlain Valley Union High School (CVU), and Lake Region Union High School.

“We have built effective partnerships to collaboratively engage students in the environment, health, and education,” said Camels Hump Middle School Assistant Principal Suzanne Gruending. Camels Hump actively promotes and practices a rich education that includes a focus on the environment, renewable energy, nutrition, and wellness. Throughout the school year, students can be found on Lake Champlain research vessels, local farms, rivershore preserves, wildlife refuges, and granite quarries.

“I am incredibly proud of the work our maintenance staff, along with our school community, led by our environmental action club,” said CVU Interim Principal Jeff Evans. “CVU has embraced the challenge of being more energy efficient.” CVU launched the “Push Me” campaign in January encouraging the students and staff to turn off computers and monitors at the end of the day in an effort to save energy and to help lower CVU’s electricity bills.

“The most visible and quantifiable success of our work has been the sustained reduction in the consumption of oil and electricity,” said Lake Region UHS Principal Andre Messier. In recent years, Lake Region’s agriculture program has changed its focus from dairy to sustainable agriculture and stewardship. The school touts its healthy learning and working environment, energy efficiency, the well-being of its students, and the increased focus on sustainability education and practices.

“We’ve been working with other state agencies and education partners to support our schools in reducing their carbon footprint across the state,” said Secretary of Education Rebecca Holcombe. “These schools are models of the good work our schools and students are doing to create a more sustainable future.”

The U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools ([ED-GRS](#)) recognition award honors schools and districts that are exemplary in reducing environmental impact and costs; improving the health and wellness of students and staff; and providing effective environmental and sustainability education, which incorporates STEM, civic skills and green career pathways. The recognition award is part of a larger U.S. Department of Education (ED) effort to identify and disseminate knowledge about practices that are proven to result in improved student engagement,

higher academic achievement and graduation rates, and workforce preparedness, as well as a government wide goal of increasing energy independence and economic security.

US ED will announce the 2014 honorees in April; honorees will be invited to attend a national recognition award ceremony in Washington D.C. in June.

Learn more about Vermont's GRS program here: <http://bit.ly/1h2Fb1c>.

Please contact Cathy Hilgendorf, Green Ribbon Schools Coordinator, at 802-828-5402 with questions.

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